

2005

LOCAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Aid for Towns in the 19th Senate District

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 19th state Senate District is ensuring Andover, Bozrah, Columbia, Franklin, Hebron, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Montville, Norwich and Sprague receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state:

Total Education Grants	\$74,696,283	This funding represents an increase of \$1,424,418 over last year's total.
Town Aid Road Fund (TAR)	\$1,210,859	
Mashantucket Pequot/Mohegan Grants	\$4,901,003	
Local Capital Improvements (LoCIP)	\$894,740	
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$2,935,889	
Totals	\$84,638,774	

Emergency Preparedness

Eastern Connecticut residents will benefit from final approval of state funding for improvements at Norwich's Backus Hospital. The funding is part of a \$1.35 million statewide investment in emergency preparedness and will finance physical plant modifications and renovations to enable the isolation of patients in the case of an infectious disease incident. This state funding for the Backus Hospital should help it do what's necessary to provide quality care to residents.

Important Projects for the 19th District

Funding for several projects received approval from the General Assembly this year. Included in the legislation is funding for shoring up the harbor wall in Norwich, making sewer improvements in Montville and laying a water main in Ledyard among others. These projects must earn final approval from the State Bond Commission.

Supporting Local School Building Projects

Our students will benefit from state support and funding for several local school building or renovation projects. The General Assembly approved over \$1.5 million in new and additional funding for renovations to Andover Elementary School and Mohegan School in Montville.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE

With record energy prices expected this winter, it may be very difficult for some individuals to pay their home heating bills. The government funds energy assistance programs, which are available to those residents to help protect them from the cold. The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) provides assistance to low-income households to help with heating costs. Contact the Department of Social Services at 1-800-842-1132 for more information.



Senator Edith Prague

a message
to my
constituents

Dear 19th District Neighbor,

Recent events have served to remind us how important government can be to the lives of people. As we help our fellow Americans in the Southeast continue to put their lives back together following the catastrophic aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, it has become clear that the lasting legacy of these storms will be an understanding that government is more than a mere bureaucracy. All of us, but elected officials especially, must aspire to create effective programs that promote mutual responsibility and serve people in times of need.

Tragedies don't always come just as a result of Mother Nature. Too many small businesses are forced into bankruptcy because of high health insurance costs. Too many seniors struggle to afford ever-increasing prescription costs and often go without. Too many schools are overburdened by increasing numbers of students. The good news is these events are manageable and, as a state official, I can help to ensure that residents are prepared to face these troubles if they occur.

I have prepared this mailing to inform you of some improvements we have already enacted and to ask for your help in setting our priorities for the future. I hope that you and your family enjoy the coming holiday season.

Sincerely,



Edith Prague
State Senator, 19th District

State Senator
Edith Prague

Legislative Office Building, Room 3800, Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Capitol Phone 1-800-842-1420

E-mail Prague@senatedems.ct.gov

Web www.senatedems.ct.gov/Prague.html

I'm proud
to represent the
19th state
Senate District
which includes
the communities
of Andover, Bozrah,
Columbia, Franklin,
Hebron, Lebanon,
Ledyard, Lisbon,
Montville, Norwich,
and Sprague

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What do you think?

I am already hard at work preparing for the next legislative session that begins in February. As part of this effort, I have included this short survey on three important issues likely to face the General Assembly. This survey will allow me to quickly register residents' priorities and learn if a broad consensus exists in our district. This survey is also available for you to fill out on my Web page (see address below). You are always welcome to write me with more detailed responses or thoughts on these and other issues.

Local school systems are struggling to fund new requirements imposed by the federal No Child Left Behind law. What should our state do to address the unfunded No Child Left Behind mandate?

- ☐ Sue the federal government for more funding and more flexibility
- ☐ Leave local school districts to decide how to cover the unfunded costs
- ☐ Raise taxes to help local districts pay for their costs
- ☐ Cut other governmental programs to increase funding for its implementation

We acted to address the state's recent budget shortfall and, as a result, it is possible our state will end this fiscal year with a surplus. If our state realizes a surplus in the coming fiscal year (FY06), what would you suggest we do with it?

- ☐ Spend more on education
- ☐ Make health insurance affordable for more residents
- ☐ Put surplus in state's Rainy Day Fund
- ☐ Provide more local property tax relief
- ☐ Provide emergency assistance to residents for home heating costs

Below are some of the pressing issues facing the General Assembly. Please rank from 1 to 3 the three issues you feel are most important:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ___ No Child Left Behind requirements | ___ Open space preservation |
| ___ Healthcare and insurance | ___ Jobs and the economy |
| ___ Transportation | ___ Crime and criminal justice |
| ___ Campaign finance reform | ___ Childhood obesity |
| ___ Gasoline prices | ___ Property tax relief |

Please trim off the survey portion of this newsletter, fold it in thirds, staple or tape it closed, and affix a 37¢ stamp before mailing back to me. This survey is also online at www.senatedems.ct.gov/Prague.html (click on the survey link). Many thanks in advance for taking the time to share your opinions.

State Senator Edith Prague
Room 3800
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

PLACE
37¢
STAMP
HERE



SENATOR EDITH PRAGUE

CONTINUING TO WORK FOR CONNECTICUT'S FUTURE



Saving the Sub Base

Connecticut explained why it's in our nation's best interests to retain the Groton sub base, and it was saved from closure. As part of this, the legislature passed a bill providing \$10 million to be used to further develop the submarine base's infrastructure.

New Guidelines for Teen Drivers

This session, legislation was passed to prohibit 16- and 17-year-old drivers from driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m., unless they are going to or from work or school, or for religious or medical reasons.

Preserving Farmland, Promoting Agriculture

Connecticut has a long history of protecting and preserving its farmland. This year we passed legislation establishing a matching grant program to help towns promote and sustain agricultural activity. The bill also establishes a fund to help promote historic preservation, affordable housing programs, open space and agriculture.

Honoring Those Who Serve: Military Assistance Package

The legislature passed a Military Assistance Package this year that will create, expand and extend more benefits to our state veterans. A toll-free phone number is being established for veterans to call about benefits to which they may be entitled.

Extending the Impact of Protective Orders

Many victims of domestic violence remain vulnerable to future incidents. This year the state legislature increased the penalty for violating a restraining order. Another new law allows judges to issue protective orders against certain persons accused of harassment.

Protecting HUSKY for Adults

The legislature acted to continue the successful HUSKY health insurance program for some of the neediest parents in our state for at least the next two years.

A Higher Minimum Wage

This year we passed legislation increasing the minimum wage to \$7.40/hour in 2006 and \$7.65/hour in 2007. This will help many people statewide keep pace with inflation and be more active participants in Connecticut's economy.

Tax Incentives for Driving Clean & Green

Alternative fuel or hybrid vehicles provide increased fuel efficiency and also emit lower emissions. We passed legislation this session that could result in greater incentives for consumers to purchase fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly automobiles. The Commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection, representatives from the federal Environmental Protection Agency and others will develop a plan to reduce the sales tax on these cars, and to consider increasing the sales tax on vehicles—such as certain behemoth SUVs—that emit higher emissions.

Supporting Stem Cell Research

New cutting-edge research has the potential to discover treatments and cures for debilitating diseases like diabetes, Parkinson's disease, certain cancers and multiple sclerosis. The legislature took action to place strict limits on stem cell research conducted in our state—and to ban human cloning—while sending the message that Connecticut supports research that is conducted ethically and professionally. Moreover, we will invest \$100 million over 10 years in this research in an attempt to attract research scientists to our state.

Requiring Consumer Credit Bureaus to Offer Security Freezes

As a result of legislation that we passed this year, consumers are now allowed to freeze their credit reports in order to guard against potential fraudulent access and tampering. Once a credit report is frozen, a credit rating agency is prohibited from releasing it without the consumer's authorization.



It's never too soon to get involved in and learn about the democratic process!

